

Chapter 1:

To say that Voldemort's possession of Harry did not effect him would be a wrong assumption. In fact it took Harry from the time it happened until a week into the summer holidays at the Dursleys, for him to figure what exactly had happened to him.

Slowly Harry began to realize that he 'knew' things that he shouldn't. Like how to do spells that he had no recollection of ever seeing, let alone studying. He also knew how to do silent casting, apparating, and Occlumency. Once he came to realize what he now knew, he spent over an hour figuring out where he had learned it from. It was then that he realized a few other things. He now knew how Voldemort had 'survived' the attack all those years ago and he knew where each of the locations of the soul fragments were, including the fake one in the cave with the lake of Ineri. He also knew the means to destroy them and started with the one in his head.

"Animus Amoveo!"

A thick black mass oozed out of the scar, floated in the air for a moment before exploding into vapors. There was no sound, no scream of pain but Harry felt as if the sun had come out. Nothing could stop him now. He looked in the cracked mirror in his room and saw that the scar had faded quite a bit. Someone would have to really look hard in order to even see it. Harry grinned in realization of this fact.

The next step was to brew a potion that would remove the magical signature from himself and his wand. Luckily he had all of the ingredients on hand. It was simply a matter of timing and knowledge. Something that he now had thanks to Voldemort. The best thing about this potion was that it was permanent.

Now that the potion was taken, Harry could fulfill his 'obligation' to the Wizarding world. Then he could leave them all behind and would fade into the shadows.

During the next seven weeks Harry bounced around England, finding and destroying pieces of Voldemort. Meanwhile the Order realized that he was missing and began an all out manhunt for their missing Savior. Little did they know that Harry had paid off Vernon to sign his muggle emancipation papers, doing so after he found out

that Sirius had done the same for him in the Wizarding one. Something that Dumbledore and the Weasleys planned on keeping from him. That only made him more determined to leave them all behind.

Albus Dumbledore was at his wits end. Harry had now been missing for over six weeks that they knew of. The only sign that he was even alive was a letter written to Minerva telling her that he would not return to school. Returning the Quidditch Captain badge along with it. The tracking charms on it had been removed before he had touched it. Never had Albus felt so out of control. The boy should not have been able to leave his aunt's house. He had even kept the reading of Sirius' will from him so that the boy wouldn't learn whatever Sirius had planned. It was a good thing too, given the fact that Sirius emancipated the boy. If they could only find him!

September 1st dawned bright and cheerful to those who had no idea that Harry was missing. His former class mates began to wonder where he was. They thought nothing of it even as the train pulled from the station. It wasn't the first time that Harry had missed the train back to Hogwarts.

Only Hermione Granger, best friend to Harry, seemed truly worried. She waited until the last minute to step onto the train. Harry's other best friend, Ron Weasley, wasn't so worried. He knew that Harry was missing and had been for some time, but he had gotten his one wish. The Quidditch Captain Badge. True given that his Prefect Badge was taken due to his grades was bad, but this one was more important. Something that Harry didn't have. He figured that Harry would make some grand entrance during the opening feast and all would be forgiven. He hadn't even told Hermione that Harry had disappeared all those weeks ago. When someone did ask where Harry was, Ron would reply "Training" and leave it at that.

The train ride finally ended and the students made it into the castle in record time. Hermione and Ron sat in their usual spot hoping to get a glimpse of Harry. But their friend was no where to be found.

Professor McGonagall was soon leading in the first years. For once Hermione ignored both the Sorting Hat song and the sorting itself. Her worry for Harry was too great for her to concentrate.

Just as the food appeared on the house tables, an explosion outside literally shook the school. Every Professor ran for the Entrance Hall, beating out the students who were racing for the door. Hermione was right behind her mentors and what she saw made her stop short.

Harry and Voldemort were locked in battle. A dome of transparent silver surrounded the duo. Hermione wasn't sure if it was to keep them in or protect everyone else outside. While the dome protected them, it didn't stop the sounds. Several heard Voldemort taunt Harry, but in a manner unusual for Harry, he didn't respond. Within moments several of Voldemort's followers arrived along with Aurors and Unspeakables from the Ministry. Both sides found that they couldn't enter the dome. Helpless to help the one they supported.

Hermione watched in fascination and horror as Harry was hit by several spells and returned several back to his enemy. The look of surprise on Voldemort's face when several of them did him actual damage was priceless. It was then that the Dark lord realized that he might not win this battle and tried to leave. Only he couldn't. She watched in pure awe at the amount of power that Harry was using. Not even Dumbledore felt that powerful. Everyone watch, mesmerized as Harry began to gather all of his power and sent a silent white spell towards Voldemort. He found that he couldn't block it. An unearthly scream came from the Dark Lord as the spell hit him. He then exploded into a shower of misty blood and small fragments. When that happened all those who had the Dark Mark fell to the ground unconscious.

Harry was panting heavily but still standing upright. A wave of his wand removed the dome. Hermione saw him reach into his pocket for something but he collapsed before he got it out.

Chapter 2

Harry knew where he was long before he opened his eyes. There was no smell in the world like that of the Hospital wing at Hogwarts. Being here meant that he had failed to activate his portkey. Now he was going to have to either bully his way out or sneak out. No matter what he wasn't staying here.

With his eyes still shut, Harry determined that there were at least four people in the wing with him. A pressure in his left hand revealed Hermione's presence. A shuffle of feet told him that Ron was on his right. A whispered conversation revealed Dumbledore and Madam Pomphrey at the foot of the bed. They were probably discussing his injuries and treatment.

Slowly Harry opened his eyes to reveal that he had been right in his assessment of who was where. The bright lights blared in his eyes, causing his slight headache to become full blown. It didn't help what Ron did next.

"Harry!" The shout caused Harry to wince and close his eyes again. Harry heard the unmistakable sounds of Ron being pushed aside by Madam Pomphrey. Harry could hear her muttering under her breath.

"Any pain Mr. Potter?"

"Just a headache."

The healer huffed in annoyance. To her the boy should have more injuries than 'just a headache'. None the less she placed a potion vial in his hand and watched as he drank it down.

The moment that the potion began to work Harry was up and trying to gather his things so that he could leave.

"Just WHERE do you think you are going, young man?" Harry really wished that she wouldn't screech. He had to wonder as to how many times she incapacitated some patient with it.

"I'm leaving."

"Leaving? You most certainly are not! You're going to stay right here in this bed until I say that you can leave." She tried to push him back into bed. But Harry would have none of it.

"As I am no longer a student here you can't force me to remain."

The healer was speechless. Dumbledore, however, was not.

"Harry, I am sure that you really don't mean that. True you did send the letter declaring such. But with your defeat of Voldemort you need to look to your future. You need an education for that."

"Very true sir but not necessarily a magical one."

Dumbledore frowned at hearing these words. No the boy needed to remain here in order for the rest of them to feel safe.

"You are quite right, my boy. But seeing as you will either join the Auror force or become a professor here, you will need a magical education. You are obviously suffering from the effects of the battle and will soon realize that I am right. I have taken the liberty of asking Molly to pick-up your new school things at Diagon Alley. They should arrive in the morning."

Harry was beyond furious. "YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO DICTATE MY LIFE! WHERE I CHOOSE TO ATTEND SCHOOL AT IS NOT YOUR DECISION NOR HAS IT EVER BEEN! I WISH TO LEAVE AND YOU CAN'T STOP ME!"

Harry practically ran for the door. Three separate stunners hit him in the back.

Chapter 3:

Harry awoke once again in the Hogwarts hospital wing. He noted that he was not tied down like he thought that he would be. He knew that two of the stunners had been fired by Dumbledore and Ron. The third he didn't know whether Hermione or Madam Pomphrey had. His bet was on the healer.

Cracking open his eyes, Harry saw Hermione seated in a chair at his bedside. In her lap was a very large book. She seemed to be in full research mode. Muttering to herself, she would occasionally touch something on his left wrist. He startled her when he lifted up his arm to see what it was.

A gold bracelet engraved with runes encircled his wrist. While it looked beautiful, he wasn't really a jewelry type person. Looking up he saw Hermione looking at him with concern. Why he didn't know but it was troubling to say the least.

"How are you feeling?" she whispered.

"Like I've been stunned by the wicked wizard from the north." he whispered back.

A ghost of smile graced her lips at his attempted humor. She went back to concerned almost instantly.

"What's wrong?"

"I can't believe that they did that to you."

"Stunning me or what you're trying to research?"

Hermione's eyes widened in surprise.

"What? I know you too well by now. So which is it?"

"Both actually."

"Care to explain then?"

"Once they stunned you, Dumbledore ordered you restrained. Then he performed a set of spells, carving runes on a strip of gold. Then

he placed the gold strip around your wrist. I tried to stop them but Ron restrained me. By the time I got free, Dumbledore was done and smiling."

"What do the runes do?"

"They keep you where Dumbledore wants you. According to the wording and the runes, where ever Dumbledore places these runes. You can go to where these runes but not anywhere else. The bracelet stays on until you graduate from Hogwarts. When you've finished your NEWTS."

"Is there no other way to get it off?"

"No, I can't find anything that will let me. It seems to be tied to Dumbledore's blood or magic. Fudge has agreed to all of it."

Harry snorted. "They just can't leave me alone can they?"

"It gets worse."

"What else can they do?"

"While they thought that I was busy trying to help you, I overheard them talking. They were over in the corner, talking about performing a Betrothal Ritual on the both of us to Ron and Ginny. They believe that since I'm muggleborn and that you're muggle raised that we won't know what is being done until after the fact. If they do that, there is no reverse. We can't marry anyone else. I think that it's their way of trying to keep us in their world. I have no idea how they found out that I planned to attend a university after I graduated from here."

"Who knows? Now how do we fight this?"

"I have no idea."

The two sat in silence as they tried to think of a way out of the situation. Almost fifteen minutes passed before Harry spoke.

"Hermione?"

"Umm?"

"I have an idea but it's extreme."

"I'll be the judge of that."

Up in the Headmaster's office a meeting was being held. It consisted of Dumbledore, Minister Fudge, Molly Weasley, and an unidentified Unspeakable. They were discussing their plans for the boy-who-conquered. That Harry was emancipated was not discussed. It was illegal what they were attempting to do. To them he was a child in need of their guidance, nothing more. What the boy wanted was irrelevant. They needed him in their world to make them feel safe. He was their ticket to fame and fortune.

"I have set the runes here at Hogwarts and at his aunt's home in Surrey."

"What about the Burrow?"

"Later. I do not want to give him a means of escape. Once he accepts his fate, I will add other locations. If he still hasn't accepted by Christmas, I will add the Burrow for the holidays so that he may spend time with young Ginny."

Molly nodded in agreement.

"I plan on presenting the Order of Merlin, First Class, to the boy at a Victory Ball. Already my staff is planning the event for Halloween at the Ministry." said Fudge.

"I think that it should be held here, Cornelius. I do not want Harry to have access to the Ministry at this time. I cannot remove the runes once I place them. What if Harry decided to fool us all and after this Ball tries to use other departments later? Imagine what damage he could do in the DML."

Fudge paled. "Of course, you are right Dumbledore. I never thought of that."

"I know, Cornelius. The idea of Ball is a good one. It will give Harry something positive to celebrate on that date. Might I suggest that it be held here?"

"Capital idea! It will keep the boy contained and create plenty of press for us."

"How long will this 'bracelet' last?" asked the Unspeakable.

"Until Harry takes his NEWTS in two years. By that time he will do whatever we ask. Once the Betrothal Ritual is done, he will be more in our 'court'. Nothing will stop us. Not even Harry Potter."

Both Fudge and the Unspeakable nodded and left the office.

Once Molly and Dumbledore were alone, Molly dropped her cheerful face.

"Albus, what if Harry finds out?"

"He will do nothing."

"I worry about this plan. I won't feel better until that Ritual is done. Once I have Harry and Hermione in the family, the Weasleys will be the crème of society. How soon can the Ritual be done?"

"Not until Halloween, I'm afraid. The runes took a great deal out of me."

Molly only nodded. "One other thing."

"Yes?"

"When I went to Gringotts, the goblins refused to accept the key to Harry's vault. They told me that the locks had been changed. The only ones to have access are Harry and his goblin accountant. No one else. I had to use the Order's money to pay for Harry's things."

"That could be a problem. I wonder why the goblins did that?"

"You don't think that Harry found out about Sirius' will do you?"

"I hope not! It would cause problems if Harry knows."

Hermione left the hospital wing. She and Harry had agreed on a plan. It was extreme but worth it. She had finally admitted her

feelings to him. What surprised her was that Harry had those same feelings for her. That made her even angrier at what the so called leaders of the Wizarding world were attempting to do. She made her way to Gryffindor tower. She needed to talk to a friend.

As Hermione made her way to the Tower, Dumbledore and Molly Weasley entered the Hospital wing. They looked entirely too pleased with themselves. Harry got out of bed to face them.

"Harry, dear," started Molly as she went to hug him. Harry moved out of her reach. He wanted nothing to do with the woman, especially her python hugs. He never lost eye contact with his former mentor. Dumbledore could almost see his death in those green eyes. The boy was beyond angry.

"Care to explain?" Harry asked as he raised his arm.

"Merely an insurance that you stay here with us."

"Against my will."

"For your protection and safety." countered Dumbledore.

Harry snorted. "For your protection and greed."

"Harry!" scolded Molly. Harry ignored her.

"I don't know where you have gotten that idea from Harry. I assure you that is not the case. It would do neither side any good if you left the Wizarding world. You are too powerful and good of a wizard to simply throw all of your magic away. You are needed here and here is where you will stay."

"And it doesn't matter what I want!"

"Of course it matters. But you are too young to make that kind of decision. As your appointed guardian I do."

"Who appointed you?"

Dumbledore considered the truth over a lie. The lie won out. After all, the boy didn't know the truth. "Sirius did in his will."

Harry said nothing to that. He knew the old man had lied. He had nothing else to say. The Headmaster's word had sealed the fate of the world he wanted to save. Their savior wouldn't save them anymore.

"Now that we have established that, I will explain the bracelet to you. Right now you can only be at Hogwarts and the Dursleys. Later, if you behave, I will add the Burrow and maybe Hogsmeade. Not until I feel that I can trust you in those locations. Do you understand?"

Harry said not a word of acknowledgement. Dumbledore knew that he was pushing his luck.

"You will attend classes here until you graduate. Finalized by taking your NEWTS. At that time you will have a choice of the Auror program or become a professor of Defense here. Personally I hope that you chose here."

Still Harry did or said nothing.

"I have assigned the classes that you will need. Molly has already picked up all of your supplies. Because of a misunderstanding at Gringotts she had to pay for the supplies herself."

Harry snorted. He knew why and was actually glad of it. He reached into his pocket and pulled out several coins. He threw them at her feet. He got an odd sense of satisfaction from it.

Dumbledore held out the Quidditch Captain's badge. "As a reward you may play Quidditch and be its co-captain. I cannot, in good faith, revoke young Ronald's badge."

Harry refused to accept it. "I don't want it and I refuse to play. Tell that to Ronald." spat Harry.

"Very well, I thought that you might want an outlet for you emotions. I see that I was wrong."

"In more ways then one, old man."

"Harry James Potter! You do not speak to the Headmaster like that! Now you apologize!"

"No, I refuse to play by your rules."

"Harry, understand that if you do not follow my instructions then you cannot leave until you do."

Harry said nothing.

"Very well, I will have one of the house elves place your things in your dorm." Dumbledore turned to leave.

"One moment."

Thinking that the boy was going to co-operate Dumbledore turned back to face Harry.

"I have the right to have a private room as heir to an ancient house as stated in the by-laws of Hogwarts."

"That is true but I do not think that you need to be alone right now."

"I could care less what you think. I demand my right. As Headmaster you can't deny it."

Dumbledore wondered where the boy had learned about that particular by-law. True it was on the books but it hadn't been used in over a hundred years. Back when the by-law was written heirs of ancient families were in danger from assassination, especially when sleeping. Thus they were given their own rooms that they could place their own wards and traps. Harry had the right to demand it. After thinking about it, Dumbledore thought that giving in on this would serve him better in regaining the boy's trust.

"Very well, Harry. A private room, connected to the Gryffindor tower."

Harry nodded. Dumbledore turned again to leave when Harry stopped him again.

"What classes did you 'assign' me?"

"DADA, Transfiguration, Charms, Care of Magical Creatures, and Potions. All the classes that are needed for you to be an Auror."

"I haven't signed a contract to be an Auror. Nor do you have the right to assign me any classes, 'guardian' or not. I believe that I will only take Transfiguration and Charms."

"Harry, be reasonable! You cannot hope to obtain any employment with only two NEWTS!"

"I'll do those and only those. You can't force me to take more."

Again Harry was right. He couldn't force the issue. Too many would rally around the boy for him to press it.

"Very well, Harry, but I hope you will change your mind."

"I doubt it old man."

"Before I forget The Minister wishes to present you with the Order of Merlin. It will be presented at a ball to be held here in honor of your victory over Voldemort, on Halloween. I trust that you will find an appropriate date for the event."

"Shouldn't be a problem as I don't plan on attending or accepting."

"You will have no choice. The magic involved will not let you refuse it."

"We'll see old man. We'll see."

Chapter 4:

In the days after Harry's release from the hospital wing you could find several of the students whispering to each other. It was now common knowledge that both the Weasleys and several of the Professors were not highly thought of by Potter. Granger, Longbottom, and Looney Lovegood were also heard to have had their say in what the former group had done to Potter. What had been said was still secret but speculation ran wild. Whatever it was, it was big.

But Potter was strangely silent. He hadn't spoken a single word to anyone, except Granger, Longbottom, and Lovegood. If he was called upon in his two classes, he ignored the Professor until they called on someone else. It was said that he did his homework, barely. How he got away with it from not only the Professors but Granger as well, the student body didn't know. No one could figure him out.

Something else that had the Slytherins cheering was the fact that Potter refused to play Quidditch. It was rumored that when Potter had turned down the Gryffindor Captain's badge, it was given to Ron Weasley. It was well known that Weasley was a Quidditch enthusiast but as captain he took that to new heights. What had everyone talking was the blow up two days after Potter had been released from the hospital wing. Weasley had mentioned tryouts to Potter, telling him that he needed the entire team there. Potter in rare form, stood and handed Weasley an envelope. What the exact wording was was a mystery. But what was known was that it was a letter stating that Potter refused to play, at all. Weasley yelled, screamed, and whined until Professor McGonagall threatened him with detention if he didn't stop. From that day on Weasley stomped around the school in a high temper.

Then there was Professor Snape. The man had somehow dodged the bullet and had not been convicted of being a Death eater. It was rumored that the Headmaster had pulled several strings, as well as favors, to keep him out of Azkaban. He was still teaching at Hogwarts. It wasn't uncommon to see the former Potion Master berating every house but his own in his anger. Especially over Potter's refusal to take DADA, where he had been given the long awaited position. His classes were now taken in fear of one's life. Already he had sent nearly fifty students to the Hospital wing within

the first two days. Things came to a head not long after with Professor McGonagall threatening to give Slytherin House ten fold of what he was doing to the other houses if he didn't stop. Then when she was done a representative for the Board of Governors appeared to place him on probation. Any more unjustified attacks, point reduction, and detentions would result in his termination. Snape was now a fire breathing dragon out for blood.

If that wasn't enough excitement, Dumbledore announced that a Victory Ball was to be held on Halloween. The main event would be Potter receiving the Order of Merlin, First Class. Practically every girl was planning what to wear, whom to go with, and all those small details that girls planned for such an event. Several of these girls looked to Potter with hungry eyes. Ginny Weasley was heard threatening some of the more serious ones with hexes, claiming that Potter was hers and hers alone.

But tension was in the air in the weeks that led up to the Ball. Most of the student body waited in baited breath for some confrontation from all fronts.

It was finally the weekend before the Victory Ball. A record number of students were planning on descending on Hogsmeade to get dress robes and such. In fact the only students left in the castle were the first and second years and one Harry Potter. In the rush to get to the shops no one noticed Hermione, Neville, and Luna breaking away from the crowd. They went a totally opposite direction from the others and headed towards the Shrieking Shack. They picked up a fourth person along the way and waited for Hermione to change into more appropriate attire for what was about to happen.

Dumbledore knew that Harry was still in the castle, or at least on the grounds, but not his exact location. No one had seen the boy since the previous evening at dinner. This wasn't uncommon as Harry tended to stay in his private room during the weekend. Nothing any of his friends or Professors did could coax him out. That odd elf, Dobby, was serving him meals during those times. Dumbledore had tried just about everything to convince the elf to help him. But it seems that the elf had little trust in him or the other professors. He didn't want to push the issue as he needed the elf to help with his plans for Harry and Ms. Granger tonight.

Since Harry couldn't go to Hogsmeade for new dress robes, Dumbledore had some made for him. A stunning royal blue, trimmed in gold. They had been delivered just that morning. He then spent three hours placing several compulsion charms on them, hoping that they would get the boy's co-operation. He also issued orders to a loyal Hogwarts house elf to bring Ms. Granger's robes to him when she returned. He needed to do the same to hers. Once the two were subdued he would perform the Ritual on them with the two Weasley children.

He loved it when a plan came together. There was nothing that could stop him now.

Hermione, Neville, and Luna led a fourth person through the tunnel from the Shrieking Shack to the Whomping Willow. Waiting just inside the tree was Harry, dressed in his finest robes. If the fourth person was surprised to see the Boy-Who-Conquered he didn't show it.

Bringing out the proper paperwork, everyone signed in their proper spot. When nothing happened to the paperwork, the fourth person began the ceremony.

"We have gathered here today...."

The day of the Ball arrived. Classes had been cancelled for the day as the staff felt that no one would pay attention to the lessons due to the excitement in the air.

At breakfast both Ron and Ginny looked entirely too smug for most people. It was now common knowledge that Ron was escorting Hermione, although she venomously denied it. As well as Ginny was Harry's date. The only acknowledgement from Harry was a shake of the head when ever Ginny and the Ball were mentioned.

The student body unintentionally separated after lunch. The boys went out to enjoy the fresh air, while most of the girls retired to their dorms to begin to prepare for the ball that night. What took the girls so long, the boys didn't know. It was one of those age old mysteries.

Unseen by anyone were Harry and Hermione themselves. Most figured that Harry was holed up in his private room. The mystery was Hermione. She had become hard to find lately. It was rumored

that she was sleeping somewhere else, most likely with Ron. That hadn't been confirmed yet, although Ron was strutting around the castle a great deal more lately. Everyone was waiting with baited breath for the final events later that night.

Dobby popped into Harry's room, with the dress robes that Dumbledore had bought, an hour before the Ball began. The elf had already redirected the charms that the Headmaster had placed on his masters clothes. He had placed them on several of the Hogwarts elves, thus re-enforcing their devotion to the school and Dumbledore. He had done the same to his Master's 'Mione'. To the elf what Dumbledore was trying to do was too similar to what a house elf went through when they were enslaved.

"Master Harry?"

"Dobby, how many times do I have to ask you not to call me that?"

"Dobby forgets, Harry Potter, sir."

"It's alright Dobby. Now what is it?"

"Headmaster has sent these for Harry Potter, sir, for the Ball tonight." He held out the robes to his master.

"Is that so?"

"Yes Harry Potter, sir. Dobby removed all the spells that Headmaster put on them. Dobby did the same for Harry Potter, sirs, 'Mione'."

Harry blushed slightly. Hermione told him only he could call her that. Now Dobby was using it. He was going to be in big trouble when she found out.

Taking the robes from the elf, Harry asked "Is there anything else?"

"Headmaster wants Harry Potter, sir, and yous 'Mione' in his office before the Ball. He is not telling Dobby why. He only says that yous should wear the robes."

"I understand, Dobby, and thank you."

"Yous is welcome Harry Potter, sir." Dobby popped away.

Harry shook his head as he walked into the bedroom. "Mione?"

"Yes, Harry?"

"Dobby's brought a message."

At the appointed hour Harry and Hermione walked up to the entrance of the Headmaster's office.

"Droobles."

The stone gargoyle began to move. Both climbed on the moving stairs. The stairs stopped at the office door. They waited for admittance.

"Come in."

Harry opened the door. He let Hermione enter first and followed after. After the door had shut both heard the lock click into place.

"Ahh, Harry, Ms. Granger. I am glad to see you both."

Harry snorted. Hermione, however, was beyond angry. However only Harry knew that.

"Why have you summoned us here, sir?"

Dumbledore was taken aback by the tone of the girl's voice. "I have asked the both of you here as I am concerned about your futures in our world. With that in mind I wish to perform a spell on the two of you with Ronald and Ginerva as your anchors."

"That won't be necessary, sir. Both of us have our futures planned somewhat."

"No doubt that you do Ms. Granger. But as a muggleborn in our society you will be severely handicapped. Using Mr. Weasley as an anchor will open more doors for you."

"There is still no need, sir. If I wish to remain in this world I would rather do so on my own, not with help."

"I am afraid that you have no choice, my dear. As your magical guardian I have the right to insist upon this."

"So, sir, you would go against not only my wishes but those of my parents as well?"

"Ms. Granger, once you entered these hallowed halls you entered a contract. That contract made you my ward, so to speak. You cannot break it. Now stand next to Mr. Weasley."

Hermione didn't move. Ron went over and pulled her into position next to him. Ginny hurried over to Harry's side. No one wanted Harry to lose control because of his anger.

Dumbledore stood and began to chant in Latin. A golden glow began to form around Ron and Ginny. As the spell continued Dumbledore began to move the golden light to Harry and Hermione. But the glow refused to form around them. Three more times Dumbledore tried but with no success. The Ritual refused to form.

Dumbledore sat down exhausted. He had no explanation as to why the Ritual failed. Arthur and Molly were frowning, while their two youngest looked confused.

"Apparently our magic didn't want an anchor to it, sir. Now can we leave?"

"Yes. The ceremony will begin shortly."

Harry snorted again and shook his head. Ginny latched onto his arm and refused to let go. Ron had a grip on Hermione's right hand and began pulling her along. The two red heads maneuvered their way to the Great Hall. Their parents and the Headmaster followed behind.

All dancing and music stopped when Ginny dragged Harry into the Great Hall. She had to forcibly pull him up onto the raised platform where Fudge and his staff waited.

Fudge faced the assembly. "Today we celebrate the end of fear. An evil wizard, you all know whom I refer to, has met his end finally. This in thanks to a young man. This same young man, who defeated him before. We, as a people, wish to acknowledge this and give him

our highest honor, the Order of Merlin, First Class. To Harry James Potter!"

As the crowd cheered, someone pushed Harry forward. Fudge turned and walked towards him with a fake smile on his face. The Minister placed the award around Harry's neck. Then he turned Harry so that they were close together for the press pictures. Just as the first snapshots were taken, the ribbon which held the medal broke, causing it to fall to the floor with a thunk. Silence filled the hall as Harry broke free of Fudge and walked back up the hall and out of the room. No one noticed Hermione had slipped away.

Dumbledore signaled the orchestra to resume their playing. He and Fudge looked at one another, trying to figure out what had just happened and how they were going to control the situation. The medal remained where it had landed until Molly Weasley stepped forward and picked it up. She declared she would hold onto it until Harry wanted it.

The rest of the Ball was quite subdued.

Next morning the Daily Prophet headline was not good.

"Boy-Who-Triumphed Rejects Honor"

By

Rita Skeeter

'Harry Potter, the Boy-Who-Defeated-You-Know-Who-For-A-Second-Time publicly rejected the Order of Merlin, First Class.

This reporter was present during the brief ceremony that was held during the Ministry's Victory ball last night at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Mr. Potter said not a word as Minister Cornelius Fudge placed the medal around his neck. As the two of them turned to face the crowd, the ribbon which held the medal, broke. This caused the honor to fall to the floor. Then Mr. Potter simply walked out of the Great Hall, not saying a word to anyone.

Now the question is did the ribbon break on its own or was there some outside influence? I intend to answer this and many more questions in the near future. An interview with Mr. Potter is being

arranged at this moment. I will find out what happened and why Mr. Potter has been so silent over this whole issue.

Until next time my rabid readers!'

Dumbledore frowned as he finished the article. Both he and Fudge were still trying to find a way to salvage the disaster from the night before. Both had issued statements to the press concerning what had happened, but those had been place way back on page thirteen. Rita Skeeter's article had gotten top billing. Now he had to worry over the so called interview with Harry. Already steps were being taken to keep the reporter out of Hogwarts.

No less important was how the medal had come off on its own. The magic involved worked so that only the recipient and a family member could remove it. But Harry hadn't touched it and he had no family there. An examination of the ribbon and the medal revealed no magical trace. So that meant that Harry hadn't removed it. But it didn't answer the question of how it had happened. Right now, several Unspeakables were trying their luck at finding the answer.

Also worrying was the failed Ritual. According to his research the Ritual should have worked. The only way it couldn't was if Harry and Ms. Granger were engaged or married. Both were unlikely, so it remained a puzzle. He would research it further, then try again during the Christmas Holidays.

Chapter 5:

The days after the failed Ritual and the Ball had Ron and Ginny walking on eggshells around everyone, especially Harry and Hermione. They had been publicly embarrassed at the Ball. Especially Ginny as everyone had watched Harry walk out on her. She couldn't even tell people that they had had a fight because Harry wasn't speaking to anyone other than Hermione, Neville, and Luna. It irritated her to no end. Harry Potter and his fame and fortune were hers and no one else's. That Ritual better work next time.

Due to the fact that he had only had two classes, Harry had no trouble keeping ahead. Not that he did much in them, just enough to pass them. He mainly focused on the muggle classes that he was taking via mail. Hermione's parents had graciously offered to be the go between for him since Dumbledore was still screening his mail. If everything worked out right, he would 'graduate' before he was released from Hogwarts prison.

Hermione had also decided to do the same. Her look on the magical world had done a one eighty after she had seen all that Dumbledore and the Weasley had tried to do to her and Harry. She no longer wanted to be a part of this world. She seriously doubted that if she and Harry had children they would be attending Hogwarts. There had to be somewhere else they could attend besides the three in Europe. It would require some research.

She looked around Harry's room. Dobby had finally gotten all of her things from her dorm and had spread them out all over the room. It had a homey feeling to it.

The day after Rita Skeeter's article came out both Dumbledore and Fudge tried several times to talk to Harry. When called up to his office, the boy simply sat there, refusing to talk. Fudge, being his usual self, threatened the boy with Azkaban if he didn't start talking. That had only proved that Harry was even more stubborn than the rest of them. He simply smiled ferally and said nothing, waiting to see if Fudge was really that stupid. Fudge's threat backfired.

What was worse was that Rita was there in the room when all of this had happened. She had snuck in using her animagus form, clinging to Fudge's robes. Both Harry and Dumbledore knew that she was

there. It was Harry who revealed her. The Aurors with Fudge arrested her immediately. It was later learned that she had tried to escape by changing back into her form and was squashed by Under Secretary Delores Umbridge.

After two hours they let Harry leave. They had gotten no where.

Over the next several weeks nothing changed as far as Dumbledore was concerned. The boy still refused to speak to anyone other than his three friends. No amount of pressure, point taking, or detentions cracked his current façade.

Dumbledore sat in his office the day before the holiday break. In his hand was yet another missive from Gringotts denying his claims as guardian/ advisor to the boy. The goblins refused to accept his or Fudge's word that Harry was no longer emancipated. They knew better and refused to budge on the issue. As far as they were concerned Lord Potter was an adult. This latest missive threatened legal action if he persisted in his quest.

A knock on the door interrupted his thoughts. An hour ago he had sent for Harry and Ms. Granger. It looked like they finally decided to show up.

"Come in."

Both students stepped into the office and sat down. Neither said a word.

"I am happy to see that the two of you decided to fit me into your busy schedules."

"Your note did not say a specific time Headmaster. We merely waited until the end of class." answered Hermione.

Dumbledore couldn't fight that logic. The girl was right, no matter how irritating it was.

"You are correct, Ms. Granger. I did not, but in the same respect a message from me needs to be answered immediately in the future."

Hermione only inclined her head.

"Now as to the reason I called you two here. I have made plans for your holiday break."

"It isn't any concern of yours where I spend my holiday Headmaster. I already have plans with my parents." retorted Hermione.

"Yes, I am sure that you do Ms. Granger. But what I have planned will not take much of your time. I wish only to try the Anchor spell again, only in a different environment."

"NO! I have no need of Ronald Weasley to help me in the Magical world! I have told you time and again, but you refuse to listen. I refuse to do this. You are treading on thin ice, Headmaster!"

"Ms. Granger! If I were so inclined I would take house points for that little tantrum!"

Hermione merely snorted.

"I see that I have failed you Ms. Granger. For that I am sorry. You may leave. I will not force the issue." He tried to sound as disappointed as he could. He hoped to use the guilt she felt to win her over to his side. But she surprised him.

"It's about time you got it through that brain of yours. But I'll leave when Harry does."

"What I have to say to Mr. Potter is none of your concern, Ms. Granger, You WILL leave immediately."

To his surprise both of them stood up and walked to the door.

"Harry, I still need to speak with you!"

"But I have to be here. I promised him." retorted Hermione.

Dumbledore sighed. "Very well, Ms. Granger."

Both returned to their seats.

"Molly Weasley has extended an invitation, for the both of you, to spend the holidays with their family. As your guardian I believe that

a change of scenery will do you good, Harry, and have placed the necessary Runes around the Burrow."

Harry snorted. A fire entered his eyes. "No, I refuse to go."

"You have no choice. Be packed and ready to leave in the morning."

"Don't be too surprised if I'm not there old man."

The couple left the office. Dumbledore frowned in concentration. The boy needed to be taught a lesson.

Hermione was muttering about how to torture one Albus Dumbledore in the most creative way that she almost missed Susan Bones trying to gain her attention.

"Yes, Susan?"

"My Aunt Amelia is here to speak with you and Harry. She doesn't want the Headmaster to know that she's here. She's waiting for you in the unused classroom two doors down from Divination."

"Thanks, Susan."

"No problem, Hermione."

"Let's go cause some mischief Harry."

Harry had no idea what Hermione was talking about, but the look in her eye had him smiling. Whatever she had planned was going to hit Dumbledore right where it hurt the most. His pride.

Hermione led the way to the classroom. Inside were Madam Bones and four aurors, two of which were Tonks and Hestia Jones.

"Ms. Ganger, Mr. Potter."

"Madam Bones." the both of them said.

"What can I do for you?"

"First Tonks and Jones need to leave." replied Harry.

"Why?"

"Because I don't want what we have to say to get back to Dumbledore."

Amelia Bones looked at both teens determined faces. "Aurors' Tonks and Jones wait outside. We will be discussing this at a later date."

"But Director!"

"Now! Or the both of you will be on suspension without pay!" she barked.

Tonks and Hestia both paled and left the room quietly. Once the door was shut Hermione did a sweep of the room and found several interesting spells. A piece of parchment recorded every spell that had been placed on the room during the last hour. She handed it to Madam Bones.

Looking at the list Amelia Bones had to wonder where those two aurors' loyalties lay. Never had she seen more recording, magical inhibitors, and truth spells placed in one room. They were definitely in some serious trouble. She looked at the two teens in front of her.

"Some how I'm not surprised." said Harry.

"I will deal with this later. Now how can I help you?"

"Can you throw up some spells to block them from listening in?"

Madam Bones waved her wand and sent several spells at the door.

"I doubt that they will like my choice of elevator music." she smirked.
"Now to my earlier question."

"Let me tell you a story....."

Both Tonks and Hestia removed the Extendable Ears from where that had placed them under the door. Thanks to their boss' spells, they were unable to listen in on the conversation. Nor were their dictation quills working properly as they now only wrote insults about

them. They looked at each other trying to decide what to do. Neither liked the implications of this turn of events.

"I'll let Dumbledore know." said Tonks making the decision.

Hestia nodded. "I'll keep trying on this end."

Amelia Bones was in shock. Here sat the Hero of their world and its leaders were treating him like a wayward child. Add to the fact that he had been emancipated and given his inheritance to two ancient and noble houses. Then there was the fact that he was also married. It was no wonder that the pair refused to trust anyone. She would have done the same, if not worse. She admired the restraint that the two teens, no young adults, had.

"I realize that I can not remove that vile thing, as only Albus can do that. But I can guarantee that I will enforce your right to be in all of the Magical places that every citizen has. He can not limit you to only three places."

"I suppose that it's better than nothing."

"Bear with me, Mr. Potter. I do have a plan"

"Harry, Ma'am."

"Harry. Once I establish that, then you may take your NEWTS at the Ministry. Done without interference from Dumbledore or Fudge."

"If he does that then he's free from the bracelet and their so called influence!" smiled Hermione.

"Exactly! Then you may do as you wish. It is your life."

"When you tell the old man, include my home. I own it and plan to stay in it for now. He had no right to keep me out of it."

"Certainly."

Hermione smirked. "If you can accomplish that, Madam Bones, then you are a miracle worker. The Headmaster will be fit to be tied with Harry out of his control and losing his Headquarters for his little club."

"About this club? Who else is in it?"

Dumbledore had hurried from his office the moment Tonks arrived to tell him that Harry was meeting with Amelia Bones. That she and Hestia had been 'forced' to leave.

For the last hour he had been trying to break the wards on the door with no success. All of the sudden the door opened. A smirking Harry and Hermione walked out of the room. Before he could stop them Amelia called out to him.

"I am rather busy right now Amelia."

"You will leave the two of them alone, Albus. We need to talk."

"I have no idea what Harry or Ms. Granger has told you, but I am sure that it is just a big misunderstanding on their part."

"I have seen the bracelet for myself."

"Ohh."

"Ohh? That's all you have to say?"

"No. Understand that I have Cornelius' agreement in this."

"Which makes him just as guilty!"

"Now Amelia, you need to see the big picture. Harry is still a boy. He needs guidance. We simply want to give him that guidance."

"All I see is several leaders of the 'light' trying to control a young man who is by all accounts an adult. Not to mention the sacrifices that he has made for us as a nation. Now you will place those bloody Runes at the Ministry, Diagon Alley, which will include Gringotts, Hogsmeade, and Harry's home your former Headquarters. He has the same rights to visit those places as the rest of us. If you do not then, I will arrest you and bring you up on so many charges you won't see the light of day again. Do we understand each other?"

"I can not, Amelia. Harry needs to be contained until he has no wish to leave."

"Keeping him caged up will only make it worse. If you don't stop we'll have someone worse than Voldemort to deal with. His anger towards you, the Ministry, and the Weasley family has put him on the edge. He could fall either way."

Dumbledore paled at hearing that statement. He knew that Harry was angry but to go down the Dark Path? If Harry turned Dark no one would be safe.

"Very well, I will place the Runes after the holidays."

"Today, Albus."

"I am afraid that I am rather busy. I have no time until after the New Year."

"You had best make time or you'll find that Christmas in Azkaban is rather dismal."

Dumbledore winced. "Very well, later this afternoon."

"I'll clear my schedule."

"That won't be necessary Amelia."

"On the contrary I think it is."

Chapter 6:

Dumbledore left the class room as fast as he could. Amelia's temper was about to ignite and he didn't want to be in the area when it blew. Something other than what she had accused him of had angered her. He wanted no part of it.

"Aurors' Tonks and Jones! Step in here!" shouted Madam Bones as she watched Dumbledore make a hasty retreat. Both women walked cautiously into the classroom.

"I want an explanation, NOW!"

Tonks gulped. Her hair began cycling through colors at a blinding pace. "You see Director, we belong to the Order of the Phoenix. It's an organization that was started by Dumbledore when You-Know-Who was in his first reign of power. As a group we commit ourselves to fighting evil and its followers."

"That does not explain the illegal use of spells on me or a minor!"

"Any conversation that Harry Potter conducts is recorded. Its how we know what is going on and how to protect him, even from himself."

"And what about his privacy?"

"He has none. As our Savior he belongs to the people and needs to be completely accessible to them."

"Even the Deatheaters?"

Tonks winced. "I suppose not them. Most of our information has been kept back, in a safe location. Dumbledore doesn't plan on revealing anything until You-Know-Who's supporters are gone for good."

Amelia looked at the two aurors not believing what she was hearing. "My God! That old bastard has brainwashed both of you!"

"No, Director. The Headmaster has shown us that Harry Potter is our only hope in surviving all this. He's the key to rebuilding our society. He has made us realize how valuable the boy is."

The look on Amelia's face made the other two women step back. "As of right now, both of you are suspended, without pay. I will decide what to do with you later as I am too angry to think right now. But I will warn you, the two of you might start looking for a new job because I doubt that you will be in my department for much longer."

Precisely at two o'clock Dumbledore arrived at the Ministry Atrium. Waiting for him was Amelia and two of her aurors. He had hoped that Tonks, Shacklebolt, or Hestia Jones would be there. Thinking they could distract Amelia and he could slightly change the Runes. But no such luck. Amelia knew Runes too well for him to do so. As he placed the Runes he began working on an alternate plan.

The Runes glowed bright red when Dumbledore finished. He was surprised and saddened to see Harry arrive with a third unknown Auror. Apparently Amelia didn't trust him.

"One down. Diagon Alley next and don't forget to include Gringotts in that one."

One hour later, Dumbledore had finished setting the Runes in the other locations. Each time he finished a location, Amelia had Harry appear to test them. Not once did Harry look or talk to him. He was losing control fast. Back at Hogwarts, he sat in his office, deep in thought. It was some time later that he flooded the Burrow.

The next morning the student body descended on Hogsmeade Station to head home for the holidays. Both Harry and Hermione had packed everything they had in the castle. Neither planned on coming back. Once they stepped out of Harry's room, Ron and Ginny refused to leave them alone. Ginny had even questioned why Hermione had come out of Harry's room. She was ignored by both of them.

On the Express Harry tried to sleep, but kept getting woken up by Ginny's incessant chatter and questions. More than once Hermione told her to shut up. Finally silence filled the chamber and Harry got his nap in. He never knew that Hermione had cast a Silencing Charm over him to keep the noise out. He settled comfortably on her shoulder and fell into a deep sleep.

Hermione removed the charm when they reached King's Cross. She then gently shook Harry awake.

"Thanks, Mione. I guess I was a little tired."

"You needed the sleep. Those nightmares last night really hit you hard."

"I know. Maybe when I get this bracelet off, they'll taper off."

"I hope so."

He helped Hermione with her trunk and continued to carry it for her off the train. Looking around Harry wasn't surprised to see the entire Weasley clan there. Behind them were Hermione's parents. Harry started heading towards them when Mrs. Weasley stepped into his path.

"Come along you two. Bill, Charlie, grab their trunks."

Harry ignored her and stepped around the surprised witch and continued towards Hermione's parents. Mrs. Weasley followed them quickly.

"Mr. and Mrs. Granger, I see that you didn't get my note concerning Hermione."

"Actually, Madam, we did. You assumed that keeping Hermione for the holidays was alright but we, as a family, have made other plans. Hermione will come home with us."

"Really! She need only stay with us for the night! I'm sure that would be fine with you. This Ritual is very important. It will help her later when she graduates from Hogwarts."

"No it isn't, Madam. You, again, presume too much. Do you have everything, Hermione?"

"Yes Dad. Harry has my trunk."

Harry handed over the trunk and nodded to Mr. Granger, who returned the nod. Then Mr. Ganger led his family to the barrier and disappeared to the other side. Molly Weasley was not happy.

"Fine! Harry let's go!" She literally grabbed Harry by the arm and apparated him to the Burrow.

"Mrs. Weasley, I will not stay here! Dumbledore knows that and I know that he told you that. Now, I'm going to my HOUSE! If you try a stunt like this again, I'll have charges of kidnapping brought against you."

He grabbed some floo powder and yelled, "Number 12 Grimmauld Place."

It didn't take long for the Weasleys to follow him. Harry had already assumed that they would and had given a newly hired Dobby some interesting orders. He ignored the family as he made his way to the Master Suite. Along the way he noted the changes that Dobby had already made to the inside of the house. He was rather pleased with it. The little elf had basically removed everything that was dark and dreary. He hadn't as of yet added any colors to the room, figuring that his Master and Mistress would like some input. But to Harry it felt like a dark cloud had been lifted.

Once inside the Master Suite, Harry began placing several wards on the walls and especially the door. No one was going to be able to listen in or enter with out his or Hermione's permission. He truly hoped that one Weasley would be stupid enough to try.

Dobby popped in to help Harry unpack and decorate the room. Going with what he knew of Hermione's personality, the duo decided on a pale yellow in color for the walls. A gold colored spread covered the bed. They decided to leave the rest for when Hermione arrived.

Dobby popped away to start with his master's prank on the 'invaders' as he referred to them. The little elf had quite a laugh over what was to come. Once Dobby was gone, Harry opened the door. He found Ron and Ginny trying to pick the lock. Both looked slightly guilty at being caught but that didn't stop Ron.

"What's with the new room, mate?" he asked as he stood up.

Harry said nothing.

"Our room is down the hall, like always. Come on, I'll help you move your trunk. Mum doesn't think you should be alone, like you are at Hogwarts." Ron tried to enter the room only to be thrown back, across the hall, into the opposite wall. He wasn't seriously hurt, just startled and surprised.

"What the bloody hell was that?" he demanded. Harry still ignored him and stepped out into the hall. He made his way to the library where he placed several wards on the doors. Ron and Ginny following close behind. He then continued downstairs where he did the same to the kitchen, the cellar and the main floor. The latter was currently being used by Mrs. Weasley. Harry couldn't help but overhear the conversation.

"He hasn't spoken a word other than to tell me that he was coming here. Also if I tried to force him to the Burrow he would have me charged with kidnapping."

"I understand, Molly. We will have to do the Ritual there. What of Ms. Granger?"

"Her parents refused to allow her to come. Mr. Granger was really quite rude about it. I've been tempted to have Bill and Charlie go ahead and bring her here."

Harry could hear Dumbledore sigh. "No, leave her be. We will do the Ritual between her and Ronald when they return from the holidays."

"I suppose that will have to do. Ron's so disappointed about the whole thing. What time can we expect you tonight?"

"About half past six, I believe."

"I'll have everything ready by then. You will, of course, stay for dinner. I'm making my famous lamb roast, with mint sauce to celebrate."

"I would never pass up one of your meals. Until then, Molly."

"Yes, see you then."

Mrs. Weasley ended the call and made her way to the kitchen as Harry finished his wards and went back upstairs to the library to wait for the show.

As she walked, Molly couldn't help but think that nothing had gone right since Harry had defeated You-Know-Who. She reached the kitchen door and tried to push it open, but it refused to move. She tried pushing several move times before Ron and Ginny found her.

When Dumbledore arrived at Grimmauld Place at half past six he was surprised at the chaos around him. He saw Arthur and Bill trying to do something with the floo. Molly was heard hurling hex after hex at the kitchen door, only finding herself having to dodge them when they returned back to her. Charlie was standing by to shield or catch her if necessary. The twins were in the middle where they could watch both rooms, laughing their fool heads off. The younger two were on the stairs, also watching, but not laughing. Percy was nowhere to be seen.

"Albus! We've been trying to reach you for hours!"

"Arthur? What is going on?"

"Harry."

"Harry?"

"Yes. Apparently he's set several wards on various rooms in the house. We can't enter the kitchen, library, the cellar, or his room. We also can't access the Floo."

"Harry has his own room? I thought that he was to stay in the same room as Ronald?"

"According to Ron, he took Sirius' old room for himself. Ron apparently tried to enter the room but some sort of ward threw him back out into the hall. We have all tried to get inside but every time one of us touches the knob we get some sort of shock. If we try again the shock gets stronger."

Dumbledore nodded but Arthur could tell that he was deep in thought.

"Where is Harry currently?"

"In the library as far as we know."

Bill walked over looking rather grim.

"William?"

"There's no way I can break them. Harry has to have tied the Black family magic into them. It's the only thing that makes sense."

Dumbledore didn't like the sounds of that. "That would mean that Harry knows that he is Sirius' heir."

Bill only nodded. He never understood why the Headmaster had kept that information from Harry. In his mind that simply had driven the wedge between the two even deeper.

Dumbledore let out a frustrated sigh. 'Why was the boy being so difficult?' The sound of a door opening upstairs spurred the old man into action. Several spells went up the stairs. Guiding one of them, Dumbledore levitated a very angry Harry down the stairs, into the drawing room.

"Arthur, gather your family. We are going to do the Ritual right now! This time it will work. I promise you."

Within five minutes, a very upset Molly and Ginny were starting to yell. Harry was seen smirking. The Ritual had failed again.

"What is going on!" shouted Molly Weasley.

Dumbledore frowned. He still didn't understand what was stopping the Ritual. Harry had no marriage contracts. He, personally, had turned several of them down. That meant that the boy had asked some muggle to marry him or he was already married to some wench. He was going to have to look it up in the muggle hall of records to find the answer.

Harry then lost all patience with the lot of them. He broke the Headmaster's Body Bind and slowly stood up. Every one else had the feeling of doom enter their hearts as they saw how angry Harry looked.

"If you EVER try that again old man, I'll gut you where you stand! Now GET OUT of my house!"

"Harry, please listen to me..."

"Leave!"

"Not until I get this Ritual done. You need to accept this. I do this only to help you later in life."

"Then you're in for a long wait old man. I need no help from any of you. My life isn't yours to dictate." Harry then brushed past them and went upstairs. They all heard a door slam shut.

"Let him calm down, and then we will try again in couple of days. I need to check something."

"Of course, Albus. But are you sure that we should continue to try? It's pretty obvious that something is blocking it. Not to mention that Harry really doesn't want to have it done." said Arthur.

"Do not lose faith now, Arthur. Whatever obstacle that is blocking the Ritual, I will find a way around it. Harry will marry Ginny and stay in our world."

"Alright, Albus. But if it fails again, I'll withdraw Ginny from it."

"Daddy!"

"No, princess. If it fails again then you and Harry were never meant to be. You will have to look else where."

"I want him Daddy!"

"I know that but it is becoming clear that Harry doesn't want you. Now I don't want to discuss it any further."

Dobby popped in at that point to announce dinner. Dumbledore excused himself and left. The Weasleys made their way to the kitchen only to find themselves forced into the dining room where a savory beef stew was waiting for them. What was different was that

a filled bowl was at each seat, along with two slices of buttered bread, a slice of apple pie, a glass of pumpkin juice and a cup of tea.

Mrs. Weasley, still upset about everything, commented on how bland and tasteless the stew tasted. She found fault with all of it.

Ron could care less. He finished his bowl of stew quickly and waited for it to refill itself. But it never did. Calling for Dobby, he was informed that the family was to be given one serving of everything nothing more. No threat, whine, or pleading could get Ron a second helping.

If that wasn't enough every game, book, broom, and other amusements that the family didn't personally own were untouchable. They were being slowly pushed out.

Chapter 7:

Harry awoke the next morning with Hermione curled up beside him. She had portkeyed over just before bedtime. Dobby soon followed with some hot chocolate while he gave them an account from the dinner with the Weasleys. Harry laughed outright at the elf's description of Ron's shock over having his food portion controlled. Even Hermione broke out into giggles over that one.

Harry's movement caused Hermione to wake up. Since he had several NEWTS to take that day, she let him have the bath first. She was going to spend a quiet day in the library, studying for her own NEWTS. Dobby would provide her with her meals so that no one else would know that she was there.

Once both were ready for the day, Dobby popped them to the library where Harry kissed Hermione good-bye. Knowing that Madam Bones was sending a missive, asking for him to come into that Ministry for 'questioning', he headed downstairs to the dining room.

The Weasleys were already seated awaiting their meager breakfast. Once Harry sat down at the head of the table, Dobby popped in the food. Harry received a full English breakfast. His 'guests', however, were given porridge with fresh strawberries on top, a glass of pumpkin juice, tea, and two slices of toast. Several hungry faces glanced at their hosts' meal in envy, especially Ron's. He was still hungry from dinner the night before and was willing to do just about anything to get his hands on Harry's breakfast.

Dobby popped in with the morning post, making sure that Madam Bones' missive was on top. Molly, who had seated herself next to Harry, tried to grab the post only to be stopped by a poised fork over her hand. She quickly withdrew it and hid it under the table. Ron, who thought that Harry was distracted, tried to grab some of Harry's food. He was stopped by some sort of barrier. Dobby popped in, shaking his head and muttering about selfish humans. He then took Ron's breakfast away before he could finish it. Ron was so shocked, he couldn't even speak. The rest of the family quickly ate what each of them had before Ron could steal theirs.

Molly, trying to making peace, asked in her motherly voice "What have you got there, Harry?"

Harry ignored her and continued to go through the post as he ate. Finishing his breakfast he called Dobby and gave the elf instructions for the day. Telling him that he wouldn't be home until evening.

"Where are you going?" demanded Molly.

Harry still ignored her as he left the dining room. Panicking she used her Order badge to call for help. Within three minutes, Dumbledore, Snape, and Remus arrived, with wands drawn.

"Molly?"

"Harry plans to be gone for the day but won't say where."

Remus relaxed. No doubt Harry was planning to do some shopping or such. Dumbledore and Snape didn't think so. In fact Snape was actively looking for Harry to curse him. The entire group saw the person in question come down the stairs. He was dressed in his finest robes and heaviest cloak.

"Harry, where are you going?" asked Dumbledore.

Harry ignored him.

"POTTER! ANSWER THE DAMN QUESTION!" roared Snape, pointing his wand at Harry.

Harry looked Snape in the eye. What happened next would be discussed for months to come. Some how Harry's magic pulsed out, without the use of a wand, into a very tight beam. That beam struck Snape in the middle of the forehead. Snape had no time to react. When the beam hit him, his eyes crossed and he fell straight back onto the floor banging his head. The twins and Ron cheered, Remus smiled, Molly gasped, and Dumbledore looked shocked. Harry simply continued to get ready.

"Harry! What did you do?"

"Stopped the greasy git from cursing me."

"Severus wouldn't have!"

"Some how I don't believe it."

"Release the spell Harry."

"He'll wake up in two hours with a headache and maybe some respect for me, which I doubt."

"Very well, now where are you going?"

"The Ministry. Madam Bones has requested me to come in to answer some questions."

"About what?"

"I have no idea."

"Very well, Arthur or Kingsley will accompany you and return you here."

"I don't need a baby sitter."

Dumbledore sighed. Everything was an argument with the boy. "I realize that, my boy, but I would feel happier if you let one of them. It is mostly for your safety that I ask."

Harry didn't look convinced but replied "Mr. Weasley I guess, since he's already here."

"There, that wasn't so hard was it?"

Harry didn't reply. He patiently waited for Mr. Weasley to finish getting ready before flooing out.

They arrived during the morning rush. Arthur grabbed Harry's arm so as not to lose him in the crowd. They finally made it to an empty lift and made their way to the DML wing. Amelia Bones was waiting outside her office. She looked livid.

"Amelia."

"Arthur."

"I'll pick Harry up when my shift is done."

"Arthur, I've known you for many years and I have never been so disappointed in you."

Arthur's eyes widen in surprise. "I'm not sure what you mean."

"Harry Potter is by all accounts an adult. You and that blasted order are treating him like a child. Now leave my office. If Harry decides to leave or stay it is entirely up to him."

"Dumbledore asked...."

"Do NOT mention that man to me! If you can't follow my instructions I will have you detained! DO YOU UNDERSTAND!"

Arthur could only nod as he watched Harry walk into Amelia's office with a ghost of a smile on his face. He left without another word or look.

Inside the office Amelia placed several wards. No one was going to be able to see or hear anything that came from inside her office. She indicated a desk and chair set off to the side.

"The Education Department sent those up for you to use. I will remain here with you to ensure that there is no cheating. Once you've finished the written part of the exams or after lunch, you'll floo from here directly to the testing area. The examiners all have taken an oath not to reveal who you are until your results are ready. Is that acceptable?"

"Yes and thank you."

"No, Harry, thank you. This is only a little bit that we as a society can do to repay you. Now get to work." she joked.

"Yes Ma'am," he smirked before sitting down and opening his first test packet.

Four hours and six exams later, Harry had finally finished the written part. Amelia's assistant brought lunch to the office door for the both of them. They made small talk as they ate. Then Harry flooed to the testing area to start his practicals. While he was in the middle of his third one, he had to kick himself for taking six in one day. He was going to be so exhausted by the time he got home.

Five hours later Harry practically fell out of the floo in exhaustion. Not only did the examiners give him the hardest tasks to do, they decided to have him take his Apparation test as well. That examiner was ruthless because Harry made no noise when he did apparate. Twenty times he had to force himself through a small tube and out the other end. At least that was what it felt like. But at least he passed.

"Finished?"

Harry looked up from the floor to see Amelia smirking at him.

"I hope so! I never want to do that again!"

"With any luck you won't have to. Now why don't you go home and rest? Your results won't be ready until after Christmas."

Harry forced himself to move and get up off the floor, groaning the whole time. Slowly he stepped over to the door and opened it only to find Mr. Weasley waiting for him. Harry straightened himself up and scowled.

Arthur said nothing but was shocked to see how tired Harry looked. He wondered what Amelia had done to put the boy in such a state. Harry walked right past him and said nothing. Arthur followed closely behind. The only words Harry said were "Number 12 Grimmauld Place" when he stepped into the floo. By the time Arthur arrived Harry was already heading upstairs, ignoring everyone who talked to him.

Ginny happened to see Harry arrive back from the Ministry. She was shocked at how tired he looked. But then realized that his defenses would be down. She rushed to put herself in his path. There was no way he could ignore her now. She was glad that she had put some of her special perfume on this afternoon.

Harry only wanted some dinner with Hermione then crawl into bed and sleep forever. Unfortunately Ginny had to get in his way. Wearing an outfit that left little to the imagination, he came face to face with her breasts. The smell coming from the witch was making him want to gag.

"Like what you see Harry?" she asked with a sultry voice.

Harry tried to step around her, but Ginny refused to budge. Having enough of her games, he literally picked her up, moved her aside, and then continued on his way to his room. Never once did he look back at her. Ginny was stunned for a moment before she ran after him. She only needed her foot in the door. He wanted her! She had felt it! The potion that she had placed in her perfume was working! But the door slammed before she could reach it. Dejected she went into her own room to try and better her plan.

Once his Master and Mistress were served, Dobby announced dinner to the rest of the house. The 'invaders' as he referred them to, rushed into the dining room like beasts on fallen prey. Tonight's dinner was pot roast, peas, roasted potatoes, gravy, rolls, and a chocolate layer cake for desert. He had already served the plates with even smaller portions than the night before. One way or another the 'invaders' were going to leave.

A rather hungry Weasley family sat down to dinner in hopes of this meal being larger than the previous night. All day Molly had tried to get into the kitchen but had no success. Their meager breakfast and lunch of only half a sandwich and a small bowl of soup had not satisfied them. Ron was already whining about wanting to go home. When the already filled plates appeared, revealing their even smaller portions, Ron lost his temper.

"THAT'S IT! DOBBY!"

"Yes, what can Dobby do for you?"

"I WANT a full portion of dinner and I WANT IT NOW!" roared Ron.

"Dobby can not do that. You is not Dobby's Master. Only Master cans gives Dobby that order."

"Then tell YOUR MASTER that I want to talk with him about it!"

"Master tells Dobby not to bother him the rest of the night. Dobby is a good elf and obeys Master. Now if you not want what you got then Dobby will take it away." The elf popped away, taking Ron's dinner with him.

Ron stood up and began to make his way towards Harry's room. His anger made him look rather evil and his thoughts weren't helping. He was coming up with several ways of getting even with his former best mate. Reaching the door, he began to pound on it.

"POTTER OPEN THIS DOOR UP NOW!"

Getting no answer, Ron tried turning the knob. A jolt of what felt like electricity went through him. The next thing he knew he was being blasted away from the door. He was flung down the hall to the edge of the stairs where he tried to become a human windmill, before falling backwards down the steps.

Fred and George both were trying hard not to laugh at the misfortune of their fallen brother. They helped him to stand and checked him over for any injuries.

"Come on Ronikins. Mum's given us some money to go eat at the Leaky Cauldron."

"Why would she do that?"

"Other than to stop you from dying, an Order meeting's been called. Mum wants us out of the way."

At seven o'clock Dumbledore called the Order meeting to order. The group had been crammed into the Drawing Room as the kitchen was no longer available for them to use. Nor were there any refreshments as Dobby refused to obey anyone's order for them. He delighted in telling each person that they were not his Master. This simply made Dumbledore more upset. Never had a house elf refused an order from him.

"We have many things to discuss tonight so let us get started. By the by, Molly, where is young Harry?"

"In his room. Been there since he came back from the Ministry."

"Yes, the Ministry. Arthur?"

"I escorted Harry to the DML where Amelia Bones was waiting for us. She dismissed me and as far as I know kept the boy in there the

entire day. What was said or done I don't know. But Harry was extremely tired when he exited the office."

"Did Amelia mention what they would be talking about?"

"No and she was very upset to see me with him."

"The brat was probably complaining of his 'treatment' by us and those under his shoe." snorted Snape.

"Severus! Harry isn't like that." screeched Molly.

"Young Harry has no doubt told her something. Otherwise I would not have had to place the Runes in the locations that I did not want him to have access to yet. Kingsley, can you shed any light on this matter?"

"Director Bones ordered me to Bristol early this morning. I left before Harry arrived and didn't return until after he was gone. I had no idea that he would even be in the office today."

"I see. Nymphadora? Hestia? What can you add?"

"Nothing. Both Hestia and I are on suspension, without pay."

"What?" "Why?" several people asked at once. Dumbledore raised his hand to regain order.

"Explain please."

"Director Bones was not happy with the recording charms and spell that we used when in contact with Harry. She felt that they violated his privacy and told us that several of them violated the law. She has yet to determine if we will be charged or not but I believe that no matter what our days as Aurors are over."

Dumbledore let his shock show. This was a serious blow to the Order. "Did you explain why you used them?"

"I tried to but she refused to believe it. She went so far to say that you, sir, had brainwashed us."

"Very well, I ask that you and Hestia stay here as guards. He is to have no more excursions outside this house. Any thing that he needs done will be done by one of us, understood?"

Several heads nodded.

"When the Holidays are over, Harry will either be portkeyed or floored to Hogwarts. He will remain until he passes his NEWTS. He will remain in our world after that."

"The brat won't stand for that, Headmaster, and you know it. I will have several potions standing by to douse him into submission. They can be ingested with his food. Too bad that demented elf of his is working against us, otherwise we could start now."

"Yes, Dobby has become a liability and I will not allow him access to Hogwarts when the new term starts."

Several heads nodded in agreement.

"Now to the remaining Deatheaters....."

The remainder of the week saw Harry and Hermione staying close to their room. The only time they left it was to go to the library. Dobby served them all of their meals, giving detailed accounts of his service to the 'invaders' which now included Tonks and Hestia. He even went so far as to shrink the portions of any food that they brought into the house. He guaranteed that by Christmas they would be down to bread and water. Harry felt that it was a justified prank and gave his full support.

Christmas morning found Harry up early to see Hermione off. She was spending the day with her parents.

"Next year we'll both go." said Hermione.

"I know. I can wait until then. Have a good day with your parents." Harry kissed her good bye before she portkeyed away. Dobby popped in with a breakfast tray full of Harry's favorites and a small package.

"Happy Christmas, Harry Potter, sir."

"Happy Christmas, Dobby."

"Ms. Hermione has already left?"

"Yeah."

Dobby set the tray down on a small table. "You eats every bit Harry Potter, sir. Dobby is waiting for yous to finish so that he cans give you his gift."

"Alright Dobby, I'll eat."

As Harry ate Dobby informed him that only the two female Order members were in the house. The 'invaders' had left to celebrate Christmas elsewhere but mentioned that they would return by tea time.

"Are you still cutting the food down?"

"Oh yes Harry Potter, sir. That is why red hairs leave this morning. I don't thinks that they liked having burnt toast without butter or jam and only a small glass of water to drink."

Harry snorted and finished his meal.

"Very good, Harry Potter, sir. Dobby will makes you strong yet."

"You're too good for me Dobby, but I thank you."

"Since yous did as Dobby asks yous get your present." The elf handed him a small package. Harry jumped up and retrieved a small package and handed it to the elf. Dobby looked at it in awe.

"Yous get Dobby a present?"

"Of course we did. That's from Hermione and me."

Harry watched as the elf carefully opened his present. Dobby eyes got huge as he saw what his master had given him. A gift certificate to a wizard's clothes store.

"I figure that since you like clothes so much now that we would love for you to have some options and wear different things. You can mix and match to your hearts content."

The little elf suddenly threw himself on his master, chanting "Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

"You're welcome, Dobby."

"Dobby's present to Harry Potter, sir, will not match what Harry Potter, sir, had given to Dobby. But Dobby does make it himself."

Harry carefully tore the wrapping paper. Inside was a photo frame. In the frame was a picture of him, resting on the sofa, Hermione leaning on him. Dobby was seated on his knee, like a child would be. He remembered when it had taken place. It was right after Harry had hired Dobby and had married Hermione. It was one of the best gifts he had ever received.

"It's perfect Dobby. I'll treasure it always." Harry stood up and placed the frame on his night side table.

"Dobby is glad you like it Harry Potter, sir." With that the elf grabbed the tray and popped out of the room. Harry went in to take a shower and dress for the day.

Tonks was having one of the worst Christmas' of her life. She was now out of the only job that she had ever dreamed of. Her parents were angry with her for the part she was involved in how Harry was being treated. To top things off that demented house elf had given them only burnt toast and a couple swallows of water for breakfast. The prisoners of Azkaban had better food than they did. But what was really creeping her out was the silence. It was starting to get to her. She jumped nearly a foot when she heard a door slam upstairs before realizing that it was Harry. The sound of his foot steps coming down the stairs made her start moving to cut him off.

She stood in front of the door and waited, ready, waiting for the battle she knew was to come. But Harry ignored her and continued towards the kitchen. To her surprise he opened the door and went inside. She rushed forward to get at least a toe in the doorway, but it slammed itself shut just as she got there. Cursing both Harry and his demented elf she went back into the drawing room to continue her

guarding. Her stomach rumbled at the smells that were coming out of the open door assaulting her senses. Food that she would probably never see in this house made her want it all the more.

It was now the last day of the Holidays. No one had seen Harry since Tonks had seen him on Christmas Day. Breakfast was a rather subdued affair as Dobby had continued his food control. The 'invaders' were now down to two saltine crackers and a shot glass of water. Every one of them had lost weight and for the first time the Weasley children were looking forward to returning to school. At least there they would get a decent meal. Ron and Ginny both told their parents that if they were 'baby sitting' Harry over the summer then it had better not be in a house that Harry owns. Two weeks were bad enough. Both shuddered over the thought of having to starve during the summer as well.

Most of those in the dining room jumped when they heard a door slam upstairs. Harry was coming down. That mobilized the adults into action. A small battle raged in the hallway before Tonks was able to slip the portkey on Harry that Dumbledore had made to transport Harry to Hogwarts.

Molly sighed in relief and went to get her own brood ready for the Express.

Harry was not happy with his forced mode of transport. In fact Snape bore the brunt of his anger and the Greasy git ended up in the care of Madam Pomphrey for the rest of the day. Then he ran for his private room where he could wait for the evening.

An hour before the Returning feast was to begin, an owl arrived for Professor McGonagall. She opened the parchment, read its contents before hurrying off to tell the Headmaster, who was visiting Snape.

"Dumbledore!"

"Yes Minerva?"

"I have just received a letter from Ms. Granger's parents. They have refused to let Ms. Granger return and have pulled her completely from the Wizarding world!"

Dumbledore let his shock show. He had not thought that the young lady's parents would do such a thing. Ms. Granger's talents were too valuable for this to happen.

"Summon Alistair and William. I want them to go to Ms. Granger's home and bring her here. Tell them to try and not hurt the parents if possible."

"You mean to kidnap her?"

"I have no choice. You know as well as I do that her talents are needed here. I will file the necessary paperwork making her my permanent ward. She will not be able to see her parents until they relent."

"I don't like the sounds of what you are trying to do, Albus, but I do worry about the girl."

Minerva left to floo the two men.

Dumbledore turned to Snape. "Severus, you might have to make a set of potions for the girl so that we can get her co-operation as well."

"At least she'll be easier to douse than Potter. Where did he get that kind of power from?"

"I have my suspicions. I believe that in that final battle Voldemort's exploding magic was absorbed by Harry. I hope that it doesn't make him Dark. I do not think that our world can handle another Dark Lord so soon."

As Dumbledore was busy talking with Snape, Harry was meeting Amelia Bones in the Entrance Hall. She was smiling at him as she handed him an envelope. He opened it and read the results of his NEWTS. His smile became huge as the Rune bracelet broke in two and clattered to the floor.

"Thank you so much Madam Bones for all your help!" He surprised her by engulfing her in a hug. Pulling back she handed him a scroll.

"Your certificate and portkey. Try not to be too much of a stranger, Mr. Potter."

"I'll write you when we're settled. Thank you again, Ma'am."

"Get out of here scamp otherwise Dumbledore will be down and try to stop you. Activation phrase is 'graduate'."

Harry's smile became even bigger. Standing as tall as he could, he said his final word in Hogwarts.

"Graduate."

The feast was well on its way when Amelia made her entrance. She could see that Dumbledore looked worried. She walked all the way down the aisle before stopping at the Head table.

"Amelia? Is there a problem?"

"No, I asked to be the messenger for this occasion."

"Messenger?"

Smirking the Head of Magical Law pulled the broken bracelet from her pocket and placed it on the table in front of the Headmaster.

"In my hand are the results of Harry James Potter's NEWTS. He passed every one that he took with an Exceeds Expectations or higher. With that done and having read his results that vile thing that you placed on him broke. He is no longer bound to where you want him to be."

Dumbledore, pale with rage and shock couldn't believe what he was hearing. "I see your hand in this Amelia."

"Too true, Albus. I helped the boy more than you were willing to. He wants to live his own life and has the right to do so. Don't go looking for him, Albus. He's long gone from England by now." With one last smirk she turned and walked out of the Great Hall and Hogwarts.

No sooner had she left than Moody and Bill Weasley arrived without Ms. Granger.

"Albus, the girl's gone. The house and her parents' practice have been sold."

Dumbledore slumped in his seat.

"That's not all."

"What more could there be?"

"Grimmauld Place has been sold! Narcissa Malfoy used most of the Malfoy fortune to buy it."

For the first time in his life, Albus Dumbledore fainted.

A/N: One more chapter to go!

Chapter 8: Epilogue

Sixteen years later:

Albus Dumbledore had been waiting for this moment since Harry Potter disappeared from Hogwarts all those years ago. The loss of their Savior had sent the masses in a panic. Especially after Amelia Bones had given the Daily Prophet the details as to why the boy had left.

The aftermath over what had happened was still felt today. He personally had been forced to resign most of his positions, retaining only the title Headmaster of Hogwarts. Fudge had been forced to resign after the public called for a vote of no confidence. Amelia was sworn in as Minister in less than twelve hours, a position that she still maintains to this day.

It was she that blocked him from searching for the boy. She refused to let anyone bother him. He had earned the right to be left alone she claimed. So he had to do the search quietly and with very little resources.

The extensive search revealed that Harry had indeed left Britain, but they couldn't determine to where. He had sold all of his properties, except Potter Manor, and stocks that were connected to the Wizarding world. The muggle ones he left alone.

Now he had him. In his research of the failed Ritual, he determined that Harry had to have been engaged to a muggle. There was no other explanation. A search of the records hadn't revealed a marriage license but the couple could have married in another country. He refused to believe that Harry had married in the Wizarding world. Surely such a thing would have been found out by now. No the boy had married a muggle. That marriage had produced a child. A child that was now eleven and magical. He now knew just where to go and deliver the letter personally.

The wards around Potter Manor were as impressive now as they had been when Dumbledore first encountered them. He was surprised to see that he was still keyed to them after all these years. His companion was in awe of the wealth and splendor that the house showed. That quickly changed to jealousy. A quick walk to

the door had Dumbledore knocking before the rest arrived to join him.

If Dumbledore hadn't known better, he would have sworn that an eleven year old Harry Potter had opened the door.

"May I help you?"

"Mr. James Harrison Potter?"

"Yes."

"I am Albus Dumbledore, Headmaster of Hogwarts. I have a letter of invitation for you to attend our prestigious school."

"No thank you."

"I am afraid that you have no choice young man."

"James, go get your father." said a familiar female voice. Hermione Potter stepped into the spot that her son had just vacated.

"Ms. Granger?"

"Mrs. Potter actually."

Dumbledore was caught off guard. "Interesting. May I inquire for how long?"

"Since before you tried that Betrothal Ritual."

That had Dumbledore reeling. He hadn't even considered the possibility because it had never come to light. He had seriously underestimated these two.

"Then I offer my congratulations on keeping it a secret for so long. I have to admit that I had not considered a Wizarding marriage for Harry."

"That, along with a lot of other things, sir. Now what else can I do for you?"

"I still need to give young James his letter. I am sure that you remember what will be needed before the boy comes to school on September 1st."

"As James stated, he will not be going to Hogwarts."

"Damn right he won't." added another familiar voice.

Harry Potter had entered the room. He was followed by three smaller children that had Dumbledore beaming. Four Potter children would attend his school. He was going to have influence over them for years to come. Now to just tell the parents why they had no other choice.

"As a matter of fact if young Mr. Potter does not attend Hogwarts then you will be breaking the law."

"A law that you forced through before you were removed from the Wizengament." stated Hermione.

"I admit that I helped form the law. But it still remains that as a citizen of Magical Britain, all magical children must attend Hogwarts."

Harry gave a smirk. "If James were a citizen of Britain, then you'd be right."

Dumbledore lost his smile. He didn't like where this was headed. "I fail to understand. He is your son therefore he has to be a citizen of Britain and must attend Hogwarts."

"Hermione and I are now U.S. citizens. James was born after that, in the United States. He already attends a magical school there. Sirius starts this fall."

"But he's not eleven yet!" shouted Ron Weasley. He had been shocked to see Hermione standing there. Even more shocked that she had chosen Potter over him and that he had to settle for a second rate wife in Lavendar Brown.

"Salem Academy starts teaching the children when they turn eight. They mix both Wizarding and Muggle academics into their classes."

"Then why are you here. The Book of Names at Hogwarts gave this address for you."

"Because we only use this house for one week a year. We combine Neville's, Harry's, James', and Remus' birthdays into a week long celebration. It's the only time that we come to England. James and Frank are the best of friends."

Dumbledore felt like he had been kicked in the stomach. All his hopes and dreams were flying away where he could never regain them. A thought then entered his mind. Young Frank Longbottom might be the key. If he could influence the boy, then the boy could help him out with James Potter. But another person dashed that thought right out the window.

Neville and Luna Longbottom entered, followed by their three children.

"Don't even think of turning to Frank to help you. He's also going to Salem as Luna and I have been dual citizens for as long as Harry and Hermione. That gives us the right to choose which school our children attend, law or not."

Harry moved Hermione out of the way. "I allowed you in this one time, old man, just so you could see how far your plans have died. Never bother us again or so help me, I'll bury you myself. After you leave you'll never be allowed back in." With that said Harry Potter, Defeater of the Dark Lord, slammed the door shut.

Albus Dumbledore looked at the closed door with a broken heart. He couldn't admit that he was to blame for all that had happened. He said nothing as he lead his companion out of the wards and back to Hogwarts.

Later that night the broken old man died in his sleep, his spirit taking refuge in his school to haunt it until another Potter would come. He was in for a very long wait.